

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 2989

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MASS, SW, AU, US
SUBJECT: VIGGEN COMPETING WITH F5E IN AUSTRIAN AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT

1. PROMINENT AMONG RASH OF PRESS ARTICLES REPORTING RESULTS OF VANCE-BURENSTAM LINDER MEETING ON VIGGEN CASE WAS ONE IN STOCKHOLM DAILY SVENSKA DAGBLADET ON AUGUST 3 ENTITLED "US AIRCRAFT TO AUSTRIA, INSTEAD OF THE VIGGEN?" ARTICLE RELATES AUSTRIAN RADIO REPORT OF AUGUST 2 INDICATING THAT NORTHROP F5E TIGER NOW MORE LIKELY TO BE CHOSEN BY GOA, DESPITE PAST PUBLICLY-EXPRESSED PREFERENCE OF GOA MINDEF ROSCH FOR PROCUREMENT OF VIGGEN. ARTICLE CONTINUES THAT FINAL GOA DECISION EXPECTED IN NOVEMBER AND THAT AUSTRIAN POLITICAL OPPOSITION HAD EXPRESSED SURPRISE OVER POSSIBLE F5E CHOICE SINCE NORTHROP PRODUCTS HAD BEEN RANKED, UNTIL VERY RECENTLY, ONLY FOURTH AFTER VIGGEN, MIRAGE AND KFIR C-2. AUSTRIAN RADIO REPORTEDLY EXPLAINED SHIFT AS RESULT OF NORTHROP'S OFFERING AUSTRIA "COMPENSATORY ORDERS" AND THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AUSTRIAN INDUSTRY IN A "THIRD COUNTRY"--IN THE MIDDLE EAST AMONG OTHER PLACES.

2. GIVEN GREAT SENSITIVITY HERE OVER US TURNDOWN ON POSSIBLE SALE OF VIGGEN TO INDIA, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON COMPETITION INVOLVED IN AUSTRIAN PROCUREMENT OF FIGHTER AIRCRAFT.
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WHILE AUSTRIA HAS BEEN MENTIONED OCCASIONALLY BY GOS SOURCES AS A POSSIBLE EXPORT MARKET FOR VIGGEN, THESE REFERENCES HAVE NEVER REFLECTED THE HOPES OR THE EFFORT SURROUNDING THE MUCH LARGER INDIAN CASE. NEITHER HAS THERE BEEN ANY INDICATION THAT THE GOS IS READY TO MAKE A FORMAL APPLICATION FOR RE-EXPORT OF THE VIGGEN TO AUSTRIA. NEVERTHELESS, GIVEN INVOLVEMENT OF

AMERICAN FIRM AND AIRCRAFT IN AUSTRIAN COMPETITION,
EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING WHATEVER FACTUAL IN-
FORMATION MAY BE AVAILABLE FOR USE IN DISCUSSION WITH
KEY GOS AND INDUSTRIAL CONTACTS. ANY GUIDANCE BY
DEPARTMENT, INCLUDING POSSIBLE CONTINGENCY TALKING
POINTS, WOULD BE APPRECIATED ON VIGGEN/NORTHROP
COMPETITION IN AUSTRIA.
KENNEDY-MINOTT

NOTE BY OC/T: DISTRIBUTION CO-ORDINATED WITH S/S-O MS. KENNEDY.

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Message Attributes

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